

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CELEBRATES 125 YEARS
OF FLORIDA PUBLIC HEALTH**

ORLANDO – The Florida Department of Health in Orange (DOH-Orange) and Seminole Counties (DOH-Seminole) are celebrating 125 years of public health with educational and commemorative events on Thursday, February 20, 2014. Both health departments will be holding an open house where public health heroes will be honored and recognized. The events are as follows:

DOH-Orange, open house, recognition of Public Health Heroes, display of historical artifacts and refreshments, 2:00-4:00 p.m., 6101 Lake Ellenor Drive, Orlando, FL

DOH-Seminole, open house, recognition of Public Health Hero, tours highlighting history and services, 1:00-4:00 p.m., 400 W. Airport Blvd., Sanford, FL.

Two staff members at the health departments will be among those recognized as Public Health Heroes. One of those employees is Nurse Case Manager Polly Cummings in Orange County who has served for 43 years in public health. She is currently managing the care of TB patients and has been personally credited by patients for directly curing them of TB.

The Florida Legislature created the State Board of Health 125 years ago on February 20, 1889, in response to a yellow fever epidemic in Jacksonville, and Dr. Joseph Yates Porter from Key West became Florida's first State Public Health Officer. Yellow fever in Florida was eradicated in 1905.

"Public health improves health, protects our community, and improves quality of life, just as in 1889. Today we set the bar higher; working to make sure all children will grow up as healthy adults, and live in healthy communities," said Dr. Kevin Sherin, director of the Department of Health in Orange County.

"Public Health Departments were established to serve and protect the greater community. 125 years later, we are still focusing on population health which means we should continue to forge more partnerships to improve the life expectancy of all citizens," said Dr. Swannie Jett, health officer of the Department of Health in Seminole County.

The year-long celebration of 125 years of Florida Public Health was launched in Key West on February 3, where Dr. John Armstrong, State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health, joined Dr. Porter's great-great granddaughter in a ceremonial wreath laying at Dr. Porter's grave site. Throughout 2014, the Department will offer educational and health information opportunities. A resource featuring "Public Health Heroes" from all 67 counties will be released later this spring. During the week of April 7-11, the Department will further highlight the 125th Anniversary as part of National Public Health Week. More information is available at www.FLHealth125.gov.

For more information about the Florida Department of Health in Orange and Seminole counties, please visit www.orchd.com or www.seminolecohealth.com.

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Florida Department of Health

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